

# via pacis

The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

November, 2012

www.dmcatholicworker.org

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## “We live by a gift-based economy...where everyone is blessed”

I have the privilege to be writing you from the Polk County Jail, an honor I share with fellow DMCW's Eddie Bloomer, Jessica Reznicek and Julie Brown.

I'm writing mindful after we get this issue of the vp out, we will not have enough \$\$ to pay our Dec. bills.

We beg at this time of year because our needs are at their greatest – and because our primary source of support – our vp readership – is most generous during the Advent-Christmas months.

Our “Works of Mercy” are the constant and grounding experience for our community. The 5 days a week drop-in center at Dingman House continues to serve 50 to 100 guests a day. Meals are served throughout each shift. Guests are welcomed to use our bathroom, take a shower, make a phone call, drink a cup of coffee, get clothes, toiletries, bread and canned foods when available.

Many of our guests use our home as their mailing address. The demand for food, toiletries, and clothing is definitely on the rise with new people seeking these basic items daily. And our community is getting better and better at taking in donations and distributing them to our guests. We have especially increased our food sources. And all of it — given away as fast as it comes in.

We are in need of socks, especially work socks and men and women's underwear. During the winter months, winter clothing, hats, scarves, gloves and blankets are in high demand.

Our “Free Food Store” continues to thrive with more than 100 people lined up to receive free fruits and vegetables at 10am every Sat. at Trinity Methodist Church. The regulars are so schooled in the program that hundreds of pounds of food are distributed in an orderly and loving

way in about 20 minutes.

What I find most rewarding is the sense of community created between our guests and ourselves. It really is like family.

Many of our regular guests are physically and/or mentally challenged. They are often the most vulnerable people on the streets. For these folks, we provide a safe space to just “be”, a welcoming place to be among friends, creating positive social networks.

Doing the Works of Mercy is labor-intense. And even though there are 15 in our live-in community, we could not serve all the meals, give away all the food, clothes, and other donations, and literally keep our doors open without a bigger pool of volunteers to share in the manual labor.

There really is a magical experience to see the human web of loving relationships that the practice of hospitality has churned out over the years.

Still money is needed, not a lot by institutional standards. One might say the real magic about what we do is how little money it takes to fund our community and our works. We have three houses (the Phil Berrigan House is funded through a separate account to pay for our peace and justice resistance work), 15 community members, and three community vans. We serve up a couple thousand meals a month to hundreds of people and we do all of this for about \$50,000 a year.

Our local Catholic Charities or county social services couldn't field a single social

worker to do any kind of direct assistance, on that amount. We do our whole effort on \$50,000 a year, including using 20 percent of that \$\$ to publish and mail out four issues of the vp every year.

The reason we can do all this is because we live by a different economic model than most people. It's a gift-based economy. In a gift-based economy, everyone and everything is a blessing.

It begins with each CW who comes to live with us. No one is paid to be here. Each person negotiates with

ing out food, or taking on a project to help maintain our houses. They too, are blessed.

The next level of givers are people like yourselves – friends and supporters of our work and community who can't always physically join us to provide direct assistance to the “least of these”, but want to contribute the work, so you donate money to help cover our expenses. And you too are blessed.

What are these blessings? These are the blessings that come when we realize the people we are serving

are the Christ in our midst. When you know you are serving Christ, it changes everything.

The communal side of a gift economy is the abundance it produces. I'm not talking about cheap prosperity theology for individuals. I'm talking about the abundance of the common good best illustrated in the 4 Gospels' six accounts of mass feeding. These stories are dramatic depictions of how we experience the abundance of the common good here at the DMCW.

Joe Davia and I started in 1976 - with an unpaid for house, some food, little or no money – plus open hearts and emboldened spirits. We started taking folks in and the food appeared, the bills got paid, and people came to share in the work.

Here we are, 36 years later, four houses owned and clear of debt, 15 live-in community members, taking in tons of food and donations, giving it all away as soon as it comes in, meeting our “daily bread” needs, so far, enough \$\$ to pay the bills.

So today we come to you with our outstretched hands begging again. Send us what you can and we will promise you a share in the blessings that follow.

Sitting here in this county jail cell writing this letter, I can't help but be reminded of another dramatic depiction of what my journey as a DMCW has taught me about true wealth and eternal life. In MK 10:17-31 a rich young man comes to Jesus asking what he must do to acquire eternal life. With love, Jesus tells him to sell all he has, give it to the poor and come follow him.

The young man goes away possessed by his possessions, unable to follow Jesus. The disciples are both “amazed” and “astonished” by what Jesus said about worldly wealth. Peter says to Jesus, “We have given up everything and followed you.

And Jesus replies: “AMEN I say to you ... no one who has given up house, family or lands for the sake of the Gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in the present age ... with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come.”

The historical Peter experienced fully this “AMEN” promise, for at the end of his life, he was the most well known disciples of Jesus, known throughout the Empire in 100's of small home churches, each would embrace him like a father plus, he has his share of persecutions too, embracing a martyr's death in Rome.

It is a great honor and blessing to share a small measure of persecution, to be part of a community wealthy enough to afford having 4 members locked up, while out works of mercy get done,,,

Gosh...it just don't get any better.

Frank Cordaro



the community how they will fit in. Each person gets room and board in exchange for doing their share work and community formation. Each is responsible for their own cash and medical needs. Some of us have part-time jobs, others draw some sort of monthly check, either Soc Sec, vets pensions or SSI. We are the most blessed.

Then there are all our wonderful volunteers, the many different people who join us during the year to do the hospitality, preparing meals, working shifts, pass-



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*Unless noted (or we goofed), all photos and art are produced by the Des Moines Catholic Worker community.*

*The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community*

*The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition. We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, shower, or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that advocate social justice.*

## Becoming a Des Moines Catholic Worker

*We are open to new community members. For information about joining our mission, contact any community member or visit our web site.*

## Mailing Address

PO Box 4551  
Des Moines IA 50305

*Bishop Dingman House (Drop-in Center and Business Phone)*

1310 7th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-243-0765  
*Live-in community members:* Ed Bloomer, Austin Youmans,  
Gil Landolt, David Goodner, Logan Porter

*Phil Berrigan House (Autonomous and Sister with the DMCW)*

713 Indiana Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-282-4781;  
frank.cordaro@gmail.com  
*Live-in community members:* Frank Cordaro, Tommy Schmitz  
*Live-in resident:* Bob Cook

## Viola Liuzzo House

1301 8th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
515-401-4197  
*Live-in community members:* Renee Espeland, Norman Searah.  
Dan Hughes, Frankie Hughes

## Rachel Corrie House

1317 8th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
*Live-in community members:* Megan Felt, Henry Wallace Goodner-Felt, Jessica Reznicek, “Downtown” Julie Brown, Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs, Colyn Burbank

## Weekly Lectionary Bible Study

Mondays, 7:00 pm. Berrigan House.  
Call to confirm.

### *Weekly Mass or Spiritual Renewal Service*

Fridays, 7:30 pm, Dingman House.  
Last Friday of the month is a Community Round Table.  
All are welcome!

## The Chiapas Project

Chiapas, Mexico  
Richard Flamer  
flamerrichard@hotmail.com



*As for ourselves, we must be meek, bear injustice, malice, and rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile.*

-Dorothy Day

Dates: Wed. December 26 to Fri. December 28, 2012  
Site: Basement of St. John's Church, Creighton, Campus, Omaha, NE

Using the Gospel of St. Mathew's Infant Narrative, we will examine the links between King Herod, his killing of the innocent children in Bethlehem and the murderous deeds of U.S. backed modern-day Herods. It's a wonderful opportunity to get your head and heart cleared of the USA Christmas spirit of glut and over-consumption by taking a two day retreat to examine the deeper meaning and spirit of the birth of Jesus and how the political powers of his day received his birth. It will be evident that little has changed in the last 2000 years.

For more info contact:  
Frank Cordaro and the Phil Berrigan CW House  
frank.cordaro@gmail.com / 515 292-4781



## ☐ Rachel Corrie Project Update

DMCW community members Megan Felt, Jessica Reznicek, Julie Brown, and Tommy Schmitz have registered to attend a Nonviolence Retreat/Training with the Michigan Peace Team in Lansing MI December 12-16. This will be an intensive training process that will deepen practices of nonviolence and explore in-depth:

- -how to communicate nonviolently
- -how to work together in a peace team and by consensus
- -practice affinity teams, group facilitation, and more
- -opportunities to do Nonviolent Third Party Intervention (with MPT locally and inter-
- nationally)
- -more about Michigan Peace Team
- -skills for nonviolent peacemaking
- -domestic & international violence reduction peacemaking efforts
- -opportunities for volunteering on projects
- - learn about the next steps with MPT, including: International Team Training

Jessica Reznicek has applied to join the Michigan Peace Team delegation in January to Israel/Palestine. If she is accepted the Rachel Corrie Project will be begging the needed money to pay for transportation. Please stay tuned.

To find out more about the Michigan Peace Team contact them at:

- 517-484-3178
- michiganpeaceteam@gmail.com
- <http://michiganpeaceteam.org/index.html>

- To stay in contact with the DMCWers going to Israel/Palestine in Jan & the Rachel
- Corrie Project:
- Megan Felt— [megan.rae.felt@gmail.com](mailto:megan.rae.felt@gmail.com)
- David Goodner— [david.a.goodner@gmail.com](mailto:david.a.goodner@gmail.com)

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## Des Moines Catholic Worker West by Julie Brown

I met John the first day Occupy moved into Stewart Square. He was one of the first people I talked to that day.

I remember as I entered the park he walked up to me, introduced himself, and then gave me a tour of the camp that was being assembled.

I assume that if I asked, he would be the first person many people met in the early days of Occupy. It just seems to be part of his nature to be warm and inviting to everyone around.

He and I quickly became friends. And it was in that time that we both became close to the Des Moines Catholic Worker. I have since become a member of this community.

I believe that John's path has been even more amazing and his story definitely needs to be shared.

John Frankling works as a carpenter, so in the winter months he was able to devote a lot of time to the Occupy movement. He was one of the core people that kept

the camp functioning and that was a difficult job.

We really pushed the "No permanent structure" rule to its limit and had several sixteen foot buildings with wooden floors and front doors, that he helped construct in the park. There were always maintenance projects and he was always our "go-to-guy".

John is also a very good cook and can make a meal out of very little. He quickly fell into the role of camp cook.

The Occupy camp became a safe haven for local homeless folks and there was always a lot of work to do to make sure people's everyday needs were met like acquiring and distributing clothing, blankets, sleeping arrangements and often mediating issues between campers. John was always the first to step up for these tasks.

I guess one could say it was a lot like a Catholic Worker community with tents.

When the camp closed in February, John was an intricate part in attempting to find warm homes for as many campers as he could. He invited two people into his own two bedroom home to live with him. A couple of months later he opened his home to two others, so he now has four live-in guests.

John has been volunteering at The Des Moines Catholic Worker and has really become a part of the family. He is always offering to help wherever needed and comes to visit with his house guests several times a week.

Most recently he built us a beautiful and very large rabbit hutch. And he has helped us get by while Frank, Eddie, and Jess are in jail.

We've coined his home as The Des Moines Catholic Worker West.

One year ago he was a bachelor living alone. This summer he hosted four people in his two bedroom home and maintained a very large backyard garden.



He is so well liked by his neighbors that they offer up their back yards for him to till and cultivate.

Along with working full time as a carpenter, hospital-ity, and gardening, he still manages to maintain very active in social justice work. He's always front line in any protest and many times he's the guy with the pot of coffee!

Taking in account all the

great things John does for the community every day and his natural ability to reach out with love to those in need, he was asked if he'd ever want to make Catholic Worker West an "official" Catholic Worker house. He replied, "I have to come up with a cool name."

Official or not, John Frankling is a great person doing great things and we are proud to call him family.



## Norman's Whereabouts

*by Norman Searah*

Hello there! I thought it would be good to let someone else write, a way of giving them a chance of saying something.

I figure that if I have one of our guests write, maybe others will catch on and want to write something. Maybe something nice perhaps about themselves and their lives and dreams, what the Catholic Worker means to them.

It's October 29th. The next two nights it'll be Halloween. Some people on the east coast won't have Halloween.

Oh yeah, I'm sorry for all the Catholic Worker houses and other shelters, poor and homeless people that went through the hurricane on the east coast. I'm sorry for those that lost homes and loved ones.

All I know is his first name. He lives on the streets or has a camp somewhere. He likes to write and draw. He seems to be a fine young man. I can't introduce him in person so all I can say is: here is my friend Dusty Johnson and what he wrote in his words.

Here I am in Des Moines again having re-

turned from a ten-month hike that took me from here to Florida to New York and back.

Down in Florida I worked in a two man car wash. In South Carolina I worked in a mom and pop garage doing mechanic work. In New York I worked as a carney.

I've been outside for around twelve years and have been traveling for the last eight. Sleeping outside through an Iowa winter for four years gave me reason enough to walk to Florida.

Two years I made it until January but jobs in both years fell through as did hope. I just couldn't take it anymore.

For money I picked up cans. But I do prefer to work over that, as most anybody would. But believe me, picking up enough cans to buy anything these days is a lot of work.

I do try to take care of my own needs. And when I don't absolutely need charity you won't see me in the soup line.

My hiking around—and yes I do take rides but those are few and far between—has taken me through deserts, mountains, snow and ice everglades, bayous, big cities and the most backward

hills. I've met lots of nice people, lots of mean people, some famous people, and just plain ol' people people.

It's really hard out here, sometimes it's a lot worse than that. Other times are so truly awesome and awe inspiring.

I wouldn't trade my life for the world. Sometimes I think I almost would nearly settle—for just half of it. Thankfully, the offer has never come.

I write a journal—kind of poems sometimes, but mostly things that I think are funny. Would you indulge me with one poem? Here it is:

out here I've seen real horror,  
out here I've seen truest beauty,  
out here I've been through darkest terror,  
out here I've been kept by the brightest love,  
out here I've seen, out here I've been.

Dusty 9/8/12

To a friend who is a welcome guest, I thank you. I believe we all got voices.

Hello it's me Norman again. A long time ago when I lived in a town, I had a friend named Sandy from another town.

I'd forgotten Sandy over the years. I realize there wasn't much to the friendship but

friendship. But thinking of her and this hurricane name took me home to recall a part of an article that I wrote. I would like to write it again if I may. It was in the last issue of our newsletter.

Now we are at a different kind of war besides all of the mankind wars. This one is with our environment.

We've had a lot of fires due to the heat and winds, where people lost their homes, maybe even jobs, and even livestock. With the heat and little rain come drought and how many of our farms lost their crops so food prices will be going up.

I talked about other things. I wonder if tornadoes will be big like the ones in Iowa, Parkersburg and one in Missouri, Joplin I recall. And since the water in the Gulf was warm, I don't know how warm. I believe that warm water helped hurricane Isaac become large on the anniversary of Katrina.

I believe that there was a lot of warm water in the Atlantic Ocean, also the gulf and other oceans and the poles. I also believe that some of our rivers must have carried warm water to the oceans as they dried up by the heat but I could be wrong.

I'm sorry for Queens' Breezy Point where more than 80 homes were burned. On the news it looked like a battle going on. Up and down the east coast this super storm Sandy killed people and animals. People found themselves in gas lines as well as other lines for help. Power was out and other things weren't running, like subways. Since there was no power, no tvs, no radios, people were in the black of night and cold.

And I wonder what's next and is there going to be another hurricane in the Atlantic Ocean or is the season done. I hope. I hate wars.

Thank you and may God bless you,

Norman Searah

Oh yeah, how much more must we face if there are other spots on Earth affected by our changing environment? Let's call an end to wars and deal with the Earth as a whole family of mankind. Perhaps we all can have peace and become brothers and sisters no matter what color we are, language we speak or where we're from. This is my wish. It is also many from our past and present dead with peace on their lips.



## The Hope of Advent

by Colyn Burbank

There is a long history of the acknowledgement that suffering is a natural part of what it means to be a Catholic Worker. Dorothy Day's many writings on this subject, coupled with her fervor for the 'more oft than not' sorrowful literature of Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Dickens, and others give a glimpse into the heart of a Catholic Worker.

Every week in our community meeting we read the Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker. It is a grand sweeping vision of what the movement strives for, which I can only describe as the closest human construct of what the Kingdom of God will look like. After we profess this new way of thinking and living, it humbly notes at the end "We must be prepared to accept seeming failures, for sacrifice and suffering are part of the Christian life."

Catholic Workers know this line so personally and intimately. We are regularly exposed to the agonies and failures both personally and corporally in the daily works of mercy. We live amidst violence, addictions, isms of every sort, and general hopelessness. When we leave the hard truths on our back step,

we are still hounded by the horrors of the world all around us. Suffering is engrained in our hearts. Yet this suffering can create more space for the Divine in our hearts when we allow it to. Suffering in its purest form is the clearest longing for intimacy with God. Sometimes it is the only way God can clearly communicate to us.

With that being said, we here at the DMCW also eagerly await the upcoming season of Advent. We look forward to it so much because it is a season full of the transforming 'newness' that Christ has brought and continues to bring. It celebrates the coming birth of our Savior, while also paying mind to the hope that Christ will come again to restore all things, along with the coinciding New Year in the Church calendar. The pain is mixed in with the hope as we wait for Him who has said "Behold, I am making all things new."

We eagerly sit with this coming newness with the faith that maybe we will get it right this year. Maybe this year we won't support unjust systems with our dollar. Maybe this year we will live in

unity with our neighbor and leave this earth a little cleaner than the previous year. Maybe this time around we will finally get it through our heads that Jesus meant what He said and that this is the most practical way to live. Chances are we won't. Chances are we won't bear the name of YHWH once again. I am already preparing myself to accept this seeming failure.

In The Brothers Karamazov, (one of Dorothy Day's personal favorite books) a character named Ivan, who rejects God because of the harsh world that God has made, longs for this hope and this newness I have been speaking on. He says "I have a childlike conviction that the sufferings of the world will be healed and smoothed over, that the whole offensive comedy of human contradictions will disappear like a pitiful mirage, a vile concoction of man's Euclidean mind, feeble and puny as an atom, and that ultimately, at the world's finale, in the moment of eternal harmony, there will occur and be revealed something so precious that it will suffice for all hearts, to allay all indignation, to redeem all

human villainy, all bloodshed; it will suffice not only to make forgiveness possible, but also to justify everything that has happened with men."

Like Ivan, I have to trust with childlike conviction in this coming newness. It's the only way I can continue to live in this world. Thomas Merton writes "We are not perfectly free until we live in pure hope." I trust that all things will be redeemed when we see our guests battered and bloodied, when we write to our friends and family in prison, when our hearts echo with our brothers and sisters around the world as we hear military jets fly overhead. I cannot imagine how this earth is being redeemed, but Christ has always been much more creative than myself.

Psalm 37 notes "In a little while the wicked will be no more; though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there. But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace."

This is the hope amidst the suffering that we live in. It is never complacent. As the hands and feet of Jesus, our community prays with our hands and labors in our

hearts to bring "Thy kingdom come." We are grateful for all of the support we receive to continue to make this house a refuge for the weary, a light in the darkness. There's no shortage of people who need a new start and hope in their lives.

The band "So Long Forgotten" writes of the longing when heaven meets earth. "With praises, hymns, and songs the oppressed will raise their city with psalms. The orphans play their horns, wave palms. The imprisoned have their freedom they extol: love bears all things, hopes all things, believes all things, love endures all things!"

Until that day, we work in the in-between. After we accept that sacrifice and suffering are a part of the Christian life, the Aims and Means concludes "Success as the world determines it is not the final criterion. The most important thing is the love of Jesus Christ and how to live his truth."

I pray you will all live in the same knowledge this Advent season that, though we may not see it, YHWH continues to make all things new. Live in this new reality.

## Christmas and the Catholic Worker

by Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs

**"What does the Catholic Worker mean to you?"**

**Mary**

"I've been coming here off and on since 2003. It started out as a place to volunteer, but after a few months it became my meal site as I was in a car accident that totaled my car, which I had been living in. So I became a guest. If it had not been for the Catholic Worker house I would have had more hungry nights and not enough warm clothing.

The Catholic Worker house also introduced me to different Mass alternatives other than just the Roman Catholic Mass.

In ten years, the staff has rotated but the quality of compassion has not. The many ethnic groups represented in the guests that the Catholic Worker house serves shows that Polk County does not discriminate on those chosen to need the services offered at the Catholic Worker.

The meals provided by the many churches throughout Polk County and surrounding counties helps to put a true affirmation for those who provide and those

who receive the meals. It's a reality check for all.

But more than food, the Catholic Worker house provides my many needed showers and cribbage for my social life. It keeps me a social person."

**Gil**

"I went to High School with Frank Cordaro at Dowling in 1968. After he became a priest, I followed Frank in the newspaper. His name came up often for his peace and justice work in the Catholic Mirror and the Des Moines Register.

In the early 80s I started working at Drake University. The man that I worked with came down to the Catholic Worker. So I started coming and donating clothes and food from my garden. So I stayed in touch that way all those years.

I started actually volunteering in 2007. In 2008, I took over maintenance duties and started working shifts. I was invited to join the community, and eventually did, in 2011.

But Frank is very much the reason I'm at the Catholic Worker. He followed the Berigan brothers and I follow



Frank and Eddie. Somebody said once that if Frank was going to Hell, Eddie would tie a rope around his waist and follow him down. Well, then I'd tie a rope around Eddie."

**Jimmie**

"The Catholic Worker house is a place that helps everybody, each and every kind. No matter race, color, whatever. If people need food, clothes, they'll give 'em if they got 'em. They keep your mail for you. You can sit and watch TV or have time to yourself."

**"What does Christmas mean to you?"**

**Mary**

"Christmas for me is a

spirit that I try to keep alive 365 days a year, as instilled in me by my mother. It is not so much about gifts as it is about generosity of optimism and positive thinking. This life is an endurance test for every human being and I no longer get depressed about the circumstances in which I am living at this time.

There's been many years I could never afford a traditional Christmas for my children so it gave me no option but to have my children try to learn more of the spiritual and religious views and less the commercial meaning of Christmas.

When I can afford presents it is not always in De-

cember, therefore my children do tend to have their Christmas presents in July. I ask them not to open till December but that never works. Christmas can happen any day of the year."

**Gil**

"I think Christmas is a time of year that we reflect on the birth of Christ and who Christ was and who Christ is. That's a question where you dig back in to who is Christ and who is Caesar. The rulers of the Roman empire were like gods. Each year, they would have a big celebration in Jerusalem. They would come from the west on horses with weapons in a big display. They were showing their power. When Jesus entered Jerusalem he came from the east on a donkey, without any weapons. See what I mean?"

**Jimmie**

"Christmas means the blood of Jesus, the day Jesus was born, our lord and father, our savior. That's what Christmas means to me. I like to sing the Christmas songs. I wrote a poem called *You Better Be Ready When Jesus Comes*"



## Back to the Future - Advent Today Through the Eyes of Isaiah: Poet, Prophet and Pol.

by Tommy Schmitz

One might wonder how a prophet born 700 years before Christmas Day could possibly relate to Advent.

Isaiah was a prophet. A known prophet in his time. But things were tough during his life—with his home base Judah, with his king Hezekiah, Isaiah and his fellow citizens were stuck between a rock and a hard place. Egypt to the south, going north. Syria and Assyria to the north, going south into Israel and Judah. Isaiah addresses the political and the personal quandaries of his people as poet-prophet.

Oddly enough in this process, Isaiah describes Advent for us, and he does so, to our parochial astonishment, by almost literally spelling out the "Aims and Means" of the Catholic Worker.

Isaiah in his later chapters so profoundly describes the experiences of "Advent", one could easily agree with St. Jerome, writing around the year 400, that Isaiah "was more of an Evangelist than a Prophet, because he described all of the Mysteries of the Church of Christ so vividly that you would assume he was not prophesying about the future, but rather was composing a history of past events."

Indeed, Michelangelo's portrayal of Isaiah on the Sistine Chapel—seemingly influenced by the words of Jerome—shows the Prophet being interrupted while reading. His reading is interrupted by a cherub who is impatient and excited, and who is just beginning to succeed in getting Isaiah's attention away from his book in order to draw Isaiah's attention to something behind him.

What is behind Isaiah that invokes what we see inside him—this poet, prophet and pol, all in one set-shot, revealed in the look so brilliantly frescoed in his eyes—is Isaiah's unstoppable knowingness, an all encompassing knowingness tinged with the sense of human irritation, a deep restlessness of things to come, of feelings for things

into the core of human restlessness, of human feelings, of human needs to somehow un-live the past and to somehow re-live the future. . . and Isaiah does so by describing throughout the final chapters, with electrical insight, the paradoxical, spiritual, existential human experiences of waiting anxiously for someone who has already arrived,

about it, somewhere—sometime in our lives we each have had these experiences.

Perhaps no where in the bible does this ceaseless, upside-down, human self-and-social paradox reveal itself more clearly than in Psalm 147, a psalm as well known in Isaiah's day, as it is now:

political relevance, today: How can we sing of Zion as a people and feel Zion's loving nourishment and presence when we have been captured and enslaved by the current "Babylonian" 1% of 1% of 1%? Today, we might be "home", but we live and work in quite a strange land. Yes, they do, these few, require us to sing to them one of the Songs of Zion. The few, the elite, regardless of our sincerity, at least want for us to act happy for their own peace of mind. Go shopping. Watch TV!

"Are we having fun yet?," we smirk.

The personal relevance of this psalm, on the level of one's self/being/soul/identity/awareness, is not so obvious.

Is there some Advent for this holy temple, this Zion within? Apparently so. Isaiah describes the coming of Jesus Christ, and the works of Jesus Christ so clearly that we can't help but to plead for Isaiah to show us the way to Jesus Christ, not in the past, not in the future, but right now.

And voila. This, he does.

Isaiah does so by encouraging the powerful/divine inner feelings of our existence as Jerusalem and Zion, not the geographical places, not the nation states, but the mind/body/personality (Jerusalem) and the ever knowing being/identity/self/soul (Zion)—just as Rumi, a Sufi Muslim, two thousand years later, would describe Solomon's "far away" temple, necessarily constructed, without dimension, within one's self, by the grace and power of one's inner Zion and by the real work done by one's own hands, and by one's own heart and soul.



as they already are—spiritually and politically in the self and social worlds of everyday people. Even today's everyday people. Isaiah in his own words, and then by way of Jerome and Michelangelo, looks back to the future, still speaking to us now.

So Advent—through the eyes of Isaiah—drills straight

while racing desperately to where one already is.

"This is what Advent is all about, Charlie Brown," he might say, embracing the paradox that Advent is knowing for one's self what the real Zion and Jerusalem actually are.

It sounds rather silly. Irrational. But when you think

*"For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"*

The socio-political relevance of this psalm in history is evident. What is not so evident, to most, is its socio-

## Armistice Day Speech in Iowa

by Gilbert Landolt

It's an honor to be here today with my fellow members of Veterans for Peace and also our like minded supporters.

This "Armistice Day" observance here in Iowa City is one of my favorite holidays of the year. The ending of WWI "the war to end all wars" was without a doubt a great day for my grandfather who served in the "rainbow division" during the war.

He understood well the horrors of war and dreamed that none of his future generations of family would ever have to experience that horror. The dream was not real-

ized. My father spent 2 1/2 years in a German prison camp during WWII. My brother was a combat marine in Vietnam. I served on the DMZ in Korea.

My son works at a TV station in Des Moines and a few years ago told me he was going to Afghanistan to do a "special report" on the Afghan war. I was in shock! I told him, "Son, you really don't want to go there!"

Thank God the TV station decided that it was too dangerous for a journalist at that time in Kabul.

I want my dream to be my grandfather's dream: to end

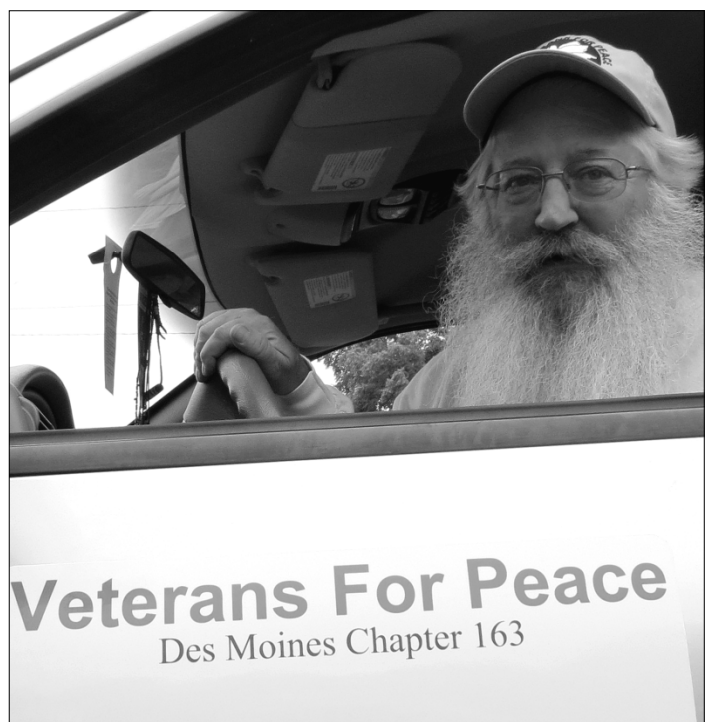
the cycle of war and violence for my family and all families, no matter which side it is on.

No more killing of innocent women and children whose dreams are shattered daily. Not my children, not your children, not anyone's children!

Thank you!

For more info contact:

Gil E Landolt,  
Pres Vets For Peace,  
DM Chapter #163  
Box 188  
Des Moines, Ia 50301  
515-333-2180  
peacevet@hotmail.com







Mr. Monsanto makes an appearance at an Occupy the World Food Prize protest on October 17, 2012.



Frank Cordaro raises a fist prior to his arrest for trespassing at the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates on October 17, 2012.



Des Moines Catholic Workers Julie Brown and Jessica Reznicek were among those arrested during the Occupy the World Food Prize campaign.



Bob Waldrop, Oklahoma City CW, Karán Benton, Renée Espeland, Des Moines CW, Sam Yergler and Alison McGillivray soapboxing at Occupy the World Food Prize.



Des Moines Catholic Worker Eddie Bloomer at Occupy the World Food Prize.





Mrs. Beomok Bok of the Korean Women's Peasant Association, recipient of the 2012 Food Sovereignty Prize, speaks at an Occupy the World Food Prize Panel. Panelists, from l. to r.: Francis Tichy, George Naylor, Denise O'Brien, Barb Kalbach.



Eddie Bloomer ladles out the grubsteak at Dingman House.



Jeff Wheeler waits for the perfect deal during a game of cribbage.



Nicholas Leete of Mustardseed Farm, Bob Waldrop of the Oklahoma City Catholic Worker, and Eric Anglada and Kevin Schmidt of the Dubuque Catholic Worker participate in a roundtable on corporate agriculture during Occupy the World Food Prize.



Bobby Terry and Norman Searah enjoy the fine fall weather outside Dingman House.



## My Sister's Pain

by Jessica Reznicek, written from Polk Co Jail cell S111

Oh, take me where the heartbreak bleeds,  
guide me down that stream,  
please chain me to my sister's pain,  
let concrete scrape my knees.  
I'll pour my love into her veins,  
as she cries,  
and kicks,  
and screams,  
please honor me for 15 days,  
to live inside such grief.  
Oh, send me to your hollow cells,  
and I'll absorb her echoed pleas,  
I'll press my ear,  
against her fear,  
until it falls asleep.  
Oh, remember me my blessings please,  
humble me my friend,  
and I'll crawl home,  
my head hung low,  
tearstains etched into my skin.



## A Free Captive

by Jessica Reznicek

A few days ago I was released from Polk County Jail, after serving a fifteen day sentence. Although my time spent there was brief, my spiritual experiences were personally unprecedented. While I acknowledge the nearly impossible task of attempting to express in words that which occurred in my heart, I will do my best.

First I want to say that I am able to articulate my experiences at all because of the loving, supportive community to which I have returned. Renée Espeland has since given me a copy of Albert Nolan's Jesus Today, for which I am forever grateful. Nolan's explanation of spiritual freedom through felt experience has helped me to shape my understanding of what exactly happened during my time locked up.

Somehow in the midst of chained wrists, cell walls, locked doors, and grieving women, beaming out from within me was a feeling of utter freedom unlike any I have ever felt before. I want to emphasize that this freedom did not manifest itself mindfully in the mere form of cognitive liberation, but rather it was expressed through me as spiritual wholeness.

Each moment I spent at Polk County Jail, and each moment since, has generated throughout me overwhelming surges of gratitude and love (although I am mourning longingly the departure of these sentiments

as my spiritual fullness reaches an inevitable period of slow deflation).

I consider myself to be one who presides in the very early developmental stages of her spiritual journey. The experiences I shared with women during my time spent in jail, however brief, humbled me nearer to a state of spiritual wholeness, though. As I lowered my eyes to the turmoil and struggle that enveloped me, I felt my spirit lunge toward what I can only describe as pure love.

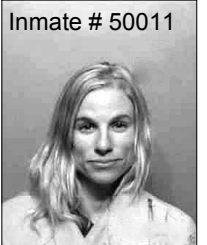
All of the passion that I had been pouring into the various political agendas that had led me to incarceration in the first place seemed to melt away the moment I entered Polk County Jail. My passion redirected, reinvented itself even, in response to my exposure to the degree of suffering that the women around me had come to endure.

I encountered women who had just had their children ripped from their arms, women who had just lost their jobs due to incarceration (and subsequently faced home foreclosure and car repossession due to lack of income), women who had been sitting in these cells for months without sentencing, many women who had nobody on the outside to put money on their commissary books, and even more women who shared with me that they had nobody on the outside to answer their calls or letters even if they did have the funds to afford it.

In the moments, hours, days, and weeks that I shared with these women, I swelled with humble gratitude. I feel I often fell miserably short in my efforts to reach out, but it was in these gestures I developed an understanding of what spiritual growth in motion feels like.

I discovered that through my own personal surrender appeared within me waves of freedom, joy, and contentment. My lack of spiritual maturation leaves me grasping at some sort of understanding as to what or who exactly I was surrendering to for those fifteen days. Was it the guards? The judge? My fellow inmates? My self? Was it all of these people? Was it everyone everywhere? Was it some form of collective energy? Was it God?

My commitment to spiritual growth is strengthening as I continue on in my efforts to unravel the spiritual mysteries laid out before me during my time spent in Polk County Jail. As I dissect again and again the perplexing juxtaposition of beauty and despair inside those concrete walls, I remain constantly aware that this episode was not one to wrap my mind around, but rather my heart around.



Inmate # 50011

## Dreaming of Warren Buffett

I had a dream recently. In it I took a long walk with Warren Buffett.

Who knows why on any given night that our unconscious throws up its images, symbols and compensatory messages.

And why would Warren Buffett be sent to me at a time when how we do justice in this country occupies many of my daytime thoughts?

What I can say is that I've long wondered what the system would look like if it was run like a business.

What if taxpayers gave their money to Principal Financial Group to manage police officers, prosecutors and judges? It's an interesting exercise to muse over what kind of justice we would have if those responsible for the outcomes were answerable to shareholders, to taxpayers.

I think that is why my

deeper self wanted me to take a walk with Mr. Buffett. In my dream I wanted to know what he thought about the justice system as an investment. I wanted to know whether the Buffett philosophy, if applied to the machine that responds to criminal wrong doing would prompt his fund managers to invest in the justice system over the long run.

When I posed these questions to Mr. Buffett he said that he never invests in a business he can't understand and that from what he'd read recently about our country's exploding prison population he concluded that the justice system made very little sense to him.

So we started our conversation by talking about the new Iowa prisons that will be opening in Mitchellville and Fort Madison. I told him that the Des Moines Register had reported recently that the Iowa Department of Correc-

tions hoped to raise spending from \$367 million a year to \$415 million a year over the next two years in order to pay for the two new prisons, nine other facilities, numerous community corrections' offices, and staff in eight judicial districts.

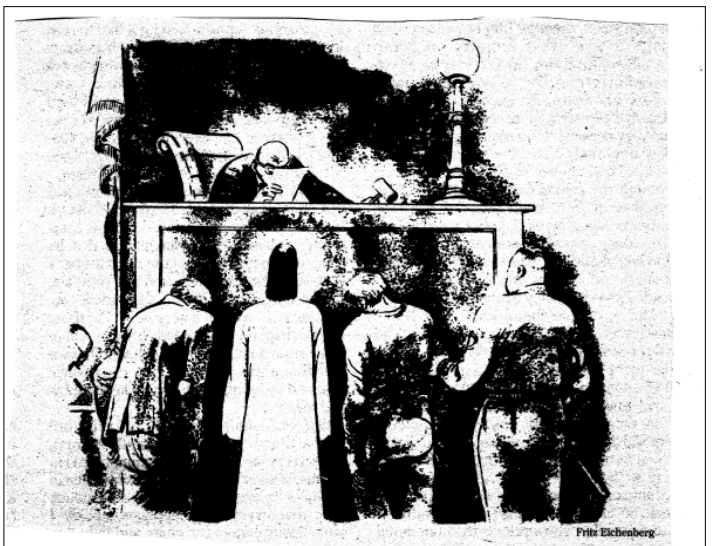
That immediately got Mr. Buffett's attention.

He told me that he has several absolutes when it comes to investing but that Rule No. 1 is never to lose money and Rule No. 2 is never to forget Rule No. 1. He said that it sure sounded to him like Iowa taxpayers are losing money when it comes to paying to lock people up.

But he wanted to know more. You see, Mr. Buffett asks questions incessantly. He wanted to know how many people are incarcerated in Iowa, how many others are on probation or parole, how much does it cost

by Fred Van Liew

Dir. of the Center for Restorative Justice Practices



annually to incarcerate one person, and what if that same amount was spent in other ways?

I told him Iowa's prisons hold nearly 8,300 inmates, an additional 30,000 offenders are supervised in community corrections programs and, according to the Vera Institute of Justice, the average annual cost per Iowa inmate in 2010 was \$32,925. By comparison full-time tuition,

fees, room, board and books at Iowa State University in 2010 was less than \$16,000, allowing two students to get a college degree for every inmate we incarcerate.

Mr. Buffett then wanted to know what the research shows about the effectiveness of incarceration. I told him the U.S. incarcerates 2.2 million people in prisons and

Continued on page 11...



# Family Farms are the Solution to Pollution

by Barb Kalbach

I am Barb Kalbach, a member of Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement and a 4th generation farmer. That life is all I've ever known. I was a young adult in the 1980's when thousands of farmers were driven off their land here in Iowa. Federal farm policies were responsible for that. By 1995, legislation was passed in the state of Iowa (HF519) that opened the door for corporate farming. In the 1970's, 90,000 farms raised hogs. Now, approximately only 8,200 producers raise 16 million hogs in Iowa. The decrease in the number of producers of cattle, poultry and other animals has mirrored this.

Along with the loss of livestock producers there has been the loss of family farmers and all the sellers of goods and services in our rural communities that served these families: livestock buyers, veterinarians, feed suppliers, livestock equipment suppliers, farm and parts stores, sale barns.

We have seen the demise of schools, churches, theater, car dealer ships, hospitals, clinics, shoe and clothing stores—use your imagination—most of it is gone.

With the loss of these families and businesses has come the loss of economic activity throughout rural communities. This results in the loss of tax revenue.

Currently, a small CAFO in Union County will command up to \$187,000 worth of infrastructure inputs by the county, yet their presence

there add no new tax revenue to county coffers. You see, industrial scale livestock producers are taxed under the agriculture tax rules originally made for small family farms. Therefore, a new factory farm raises no new revenue for the county, yet it uses large amounts of county resources in infrastructure needs.

As corporate agriculture slowly takes over the food production system in the U.S., there will be serious ramifications for those of us still on the land and for our urban counterparts.

No longer will the "next generation" take over the family farm. In a one mile radius of where my children grew up, there were eight young men who wanted to farm. This was during the 80's and early 90's. It was not economically feasible at that time to bring your son or daughter into most family operations. Those eight young men had to leave the area to find a job and raise their families. Not only are these families lost to the community, but the innate knowledge of the soil, how to protect it, how best to farm it, how best to raise and care for livestock, how best to grow and store food -- that knowledge is gone, too.

Do we really believe that a CEO in a corner office can give hired people the tools and knowledge they need to till and harvest and raise livestock in a sustainable way?

The answer is "no" and we have about one more

generation and that knowledge will be gone.

Will we trust corporate America to feed us at an affordable price just because they "love to farm"? I am sure not. But that is what individual family farmers have done for generations.

Do we trust agriculture corporations to care about soil erosion, air pollution or water quality? It has been my experience that they are only for what enhances their bottom line. Generally, clean air and water do not do that.

In most CAFO's, newly bred sows stand in a gestation crate that is 2 ft. by 7 ft. for 114 days straight! We wouldn't do that to a dog, a cat or a horse, but we allow that with corporate livestock farming.

Our family farm would never treat an animal that way. Our hogs and cattle

always had food, shade, warmth, water, and room to move around; because we looked at them as God's creatures in our care.

People continue to leave rural Iowa, or, at the very least, drive long distances to large urban areas just to have a job. In rural communities, residents and businesses won't build next to CAFO's because of flies and repulsive odors. There tends to be less retail and fewer retail options. Home values collapse next to CAFO's.

Factory farms have not only driven rural residents away, but oversight of resources and animals is now minimal at best. Iowa had 572 impaired waterways now, decreased recreational activities and drinking water for humans and animals.

Our oversight bureaus, such as the Department of Natural Resources (DNR),

are continually defunded even as CAFO numbers continue to climb.

Mother Nature could clean up what small family farms produced in manure. But how much longer can she clean up after the millions of gallons of liquid manure applied to Iowa's soil each and every year?

Iowa needs a "Marshall Plan" to help her repopulate; a plan that will re-vitalize our small towns and cities and make them attractive to families again. Food production needs to be put back into the hands of families who know how to raise a healthy product and care properly for their crops, their animals and the environment. This is the course of a strong and vibrant Iowa. It is the answer to our polluted waterways, the air pollution, and the degradation of true animal husbandry. It is part of the answer to our declining school systems as children return to small schools and small town pride. It is the answer to the loss of our proud land grant universities to corporate control.

Iowa should not have to deal with the Environmental Protection Agency just to have clean water and proper oversight of industrial scale agriculture.

I am a ten year member of Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement. They are the only organization working hard, one CAFO at a time, to reverse the vertical integration of corporate agriculture. Join us!



## Join a Campaign to Label GE Foods!

by Heather Mackenzie  
hmackenzie@ffwlocal.org

For over 15 years, genetically engineered crops have been in the food on our grocery store shelves without our knowledge or our consent. These foods are pervasive, but most of us don't even know when we're putting them in our mouths. GE foods are largely untested and potentially unsafe. It's our right to know when we are consuming these foods.

The first genetically engineered crops became commercially available in the United States in 1996, and now over 90% of cotton and soybeans and over 85% of corn grown in the U.S. is genetically engineered.

From Australia to Brazil to all member nations of the European Union, nearly 50 other countries require the labeling of GE foods, but the U.S. has not taken this essential step to protect its citizens

The companies that engineer these crops submit their own safety-testing data, and independent research on GE food is limited because biotechnology companies prohibit cultivation for research purposes. Some of the independent, peer-reviewed research that has been done on biotech crops has revealed troubling health implications. However, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has no way to track adverse health effects in people consuming genetically engineered foods, and because there is no requirement that foods containing GE ingredients be labeled, consumers do not know when they are eating these potentially unsafe foods. For consumers to have the opportunity to make informed choices about their food, all GE foods should be labeled.

The team of activists in Des Moines is part of a

statewide campaign to push for the mandatory labeling of GE foods. Future events such as film screenings, edu-

cational sessions and other exciting group actions will be taking place over the coming months.

Sign the petition below and mail it into the Catholic Worker. Contact me if you want to do more to help!

Dear Elected Official,

As a resident of Iowa, I urge you to pass state legislation that would require genetically engineered (GE) foods to be labeled.

GE foods have become pervasive, are largely untested and are potentially unsafe. I deserve the right to know whether or not the food I buy is genetically engineered. Just as labels list fat, sodium and sugar, labels should tell the buyer whether or not the product includes GE ingredients. Anything less is misleading and leaves consumers in the dark about the food they're eating.

Thank you for your consideration,

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check if you want to volunteer with Food & Water Watch on this campaign.

For more information,  
please visit [www.foodandwaterwatch.org](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org)





# Homecoming: the arc of my resistance life

by Frank Cordaro

One thing being locked up affords a person is plenty of time to think and reflect upon one's life, where they have been and where they might be going. I've been reflecting lately on the arc of my resistance life.

My first act of civil disobedience took place on Aug 9th, 1977 doing what the Jonah House folks called a "blood spilling" on the pillars of the Pentagon. My first memory of being handcuffed was seeing blood on the Pentagon pillars, chanting "The Pentagon is a temple of death."

From there we were brought to court and found guilty, and in my pre-sentencing statement I made a passionate plea for my home state of Iowa. I told the judge that Iowa farmlands could not survive a nuclear war, and that even if our nuclear weapons were never used, the people of Iowa were suffering because of the massive misuse of resources and monies wasted on the arms race while vital human and social needs were unmet, particularly for the poor whom we served at the Des Moines Catholic Worker. My speech earned me a 30 day jail sentence.

After doing my time, I said my goodbyes to Phil Berrigan and Liz McAlister and the folks at Jonah House and hitchhiked back to Iowa a changed man. I knew then that Dan and Phil Berrigan were going to be my Rabbis and that I would be a disciple of their "Faith-based Nonviolent Resistance to War" school. I was also eager to get back to Iowa and the DMCW, mindful that whatever I was going to do with my newfound life, I was going to do it in Iowa, as an Iowan.

Soon after my return home I looked around to see where I could take my resistance to war energies and discovered the Strategic Air Command at Offutt AFB, just south of Omaha, NE. Next to the Pentagon, the SAC base at Offutt is the most dangerous threat to life on the planet, and for the next 20 years of my resistance life I would leave the state of Iowa to do the work.

My resistance work was not limited to the SAC base, nor was it always war related or out of state, but I've logged most of my 5 1/2 years of jail time from "crossing the line" at Offutt AFB, receiving a six month sentence for each of the last eight times.

During these years I began to see myself as a practitioner of direct nonviolent

resistance for social change for a wide range of issues, including prison reform, the death penalty, nuclear energy, abortion, U.S. foreign policy, worker's rights and health care.

In the 1980's, Bishop Dingman and others made a noble effort to save the "Family Farm." As a country priest at the time, and out of love for Bishop Dingman, I began my nonviolent resistance to the rural crisis, sharing in Bishop Dingman's passion for the family farm.

been inevitable results of bad policy."

Where Bishop Dingman and most of the progressive rural/family farm organizations in the 1980's had it wrong was they thought ownership of the land was the key issue. As it has played out, those who own the land had little to nothing to say about how it is used, if they wanted to be in the "\$\$\$ making" corporate food system.

As I wrote in 1984 in the

Also in 1980, Dan and Phil Berrigan were among 8 people who did the first Plowshares witness. They became known as the "Plowshares 8" after taking hammers and blood to the nuclear warhead casings at a G.E. weapons plant in King of Prussia, PA. Using the words of Prophet Isaiah (Is 2:4) as a biblical mandate, "They shall beat their swords in to plowshares and study war no more."

Since world leaders refused to disarm countries of

participate in the Gods of Metal Plowshares witness. In May 1998, five of us took hammers and blood to a B52 Bomber at Andrews A.F.B. during their annual airshow.

Upon my return to Iowa, after serving a six month prison sentence, a lot had changed. I moved back into the DMCW community, the crisis in vocation to the priesthood continued and our resistance to U.S.-led wars came to Des Moines.

In 2000 we discovered our own DM based National Guard Air Force's F-16s were helping to enforce the no-fly zones over Iraq. These F-16s were maintained and stationed at the DM south side airport, practically in my family home's backyard! We started doing weekly vigils outside of the main entrance of the F-16s home base. We organized direct action witness, logging arrests, and I started doing jail time locally for the first time.

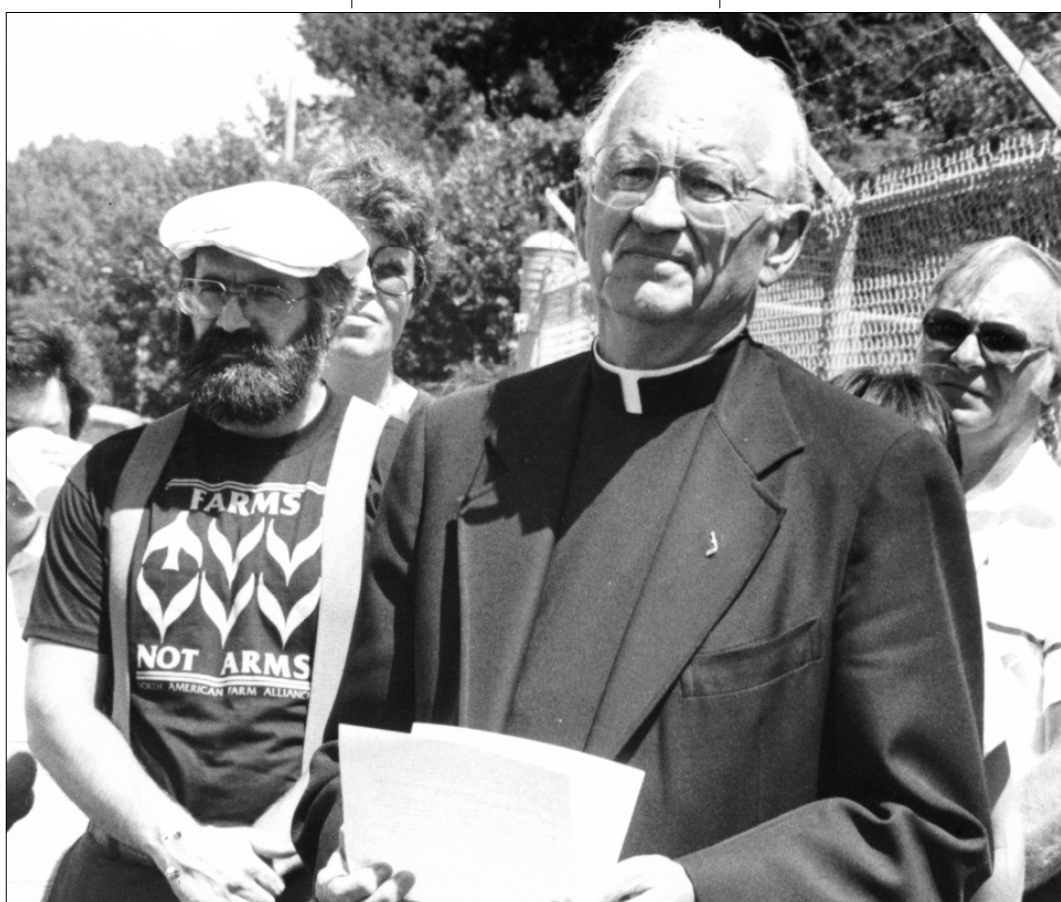
When 9/11 happened, followed by the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, we started to split our direct action attention between the F-16s, STARC Armory—the IA National Guard HQ and local military recruitment centers.

Over the next ten years, thousands of Iowans left the state to fight in these "immoral, unjust and illegal" (Pope John Paul II) U.S.-led wars in the Middle East. One thing was clear: there was no longer a need for me to leave the state to resist the U.S. war machine.

Then, like out of nowhere, the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement appeared. We were watching its development from September of last year. When Norman, Eddie and I returned to Des Moines from the National CW gathering in Las Vegas, it was right after 36 people got arrested at our Iowa State Capitol—four of whom were DM Catholic Workers—for occupying "People's Park" on the west end of the Capitol grounds.

The OWS movement was like a wild fire across the country, and it clearly came to Des Moines in a big way.

What the OWS movement did was reframe the public discourse on how the world is run. By focusing on the NYC stock market, the movement named the global financial system as the true power behind the nations of the world. It exposed the truth that it doesn't matter if a government is a democracy, or communist, or socialist, or even a dictatorship. All governments have to play by the rules of the global financial



Frank Cordaro with Bishop Dingman at an August 1986 "Farms not Arms" protest at Offutt AFB.

Bishop Dingman saw all too clearly the dark side of corporate agribusiness' takeover of Iowa's family farm system.

On February 21, 1986 at a "Conf on Religious Ethics and Technological Change" at IA State, Bishop Dingman said "The problem is a value crisis. There has been a shift from agriculture to agribusiness. In our thinking we have accepted the alleged efficiency of the large farm conglomerate—an efficiency which has never been proven—permitting our policy to drive farm people from the land to the cities. Those who have advanced such claims have never included in their cost accounting the vastly increased expenditures required to meet the needs of these new urban poor. We should include the social and human costs resulting from the needless shift of population from the vacated farm homes to over crowded cities and suburbs. They should include the ecological damage to soil, water and food produced by attitudes and practices that treat agriculture as an industrial venture rather than a biological enterprise. Huge social costs have

Iowa Idea, "We are at a point where corporate hold on our food system is a forgone conclusion. The corporate model has controlled farm-related industries for many years. Farmers have been forced to keep up with every new "advance" in machinery, fertilizer, and seed development. The trend has been towards largeness in every aspect. Capital-intense, petroleum-based, high-tech farming practices have become the accepted techniques."

The truth is, in the Corporate World Food System we have right now, there are two types of people directly connected with Iowa farm land: Those who own it and those who work it. For any given piece of farm land the same person who owns the land could be working it or not. It does not matter. Neither the owners nor the workers have any say in the Corporate World Food System.

The hard truth of it all is that by the 1980's the family farm system that Bishop Dingman wanted to save was already lost and the best we could do was bear witness to its demise.

nuclear weapons, as mandated by their own treaties, and since the American Catholic Bishops had taken no real action to hold the U.S. Government accountable for its part in the Nuclear Arms race, one that the U.S. has always taken the lead in, the Plowshares 8 believed individuals needed to initiate these acts of disarmament.

For those of us who are part of the Faith-based Nonviolent Resistance movement in the U.S., taking hammers and blood to a nuclear weapon, a nuclear weapon system, or a nuclear weapon in development was a moral mandate as a witness of hope and faithfulness in these dark times.

I knew as soon as I heard about the Plowshares 8 witness that I would do one. But for fear of the consequences and until that time, the human equity and personal sacrifice that Plowshares activists took on became a personal measuring stick for the resistance work that I was doing.

Eighteen years later, with a crisis in my vocation to the priesthood, I left Iowa to par-



Homecoming Continued from page 10...

system if they want a share of the benefits and wealth of the modern world.

OWS's phrase, the "99% vs. 1%" clarifies and reveals the real division of power and control that the corporate global elites, the 1%, have over the vast majority of the human race, the 99%.

In my last VP article I named the spirit behind the global financial system as "Global Corporatism," our modern version of what St. Paul calls "the Powers and Principalities" (Ep 6:12) on steroids. By this global standard the gap between the rich and the poor mirrors that of the Roman Empire of the New Testament era.

After our successful Occupy the Iowa Caucus Campaign, DM Occupiers started to look around to see what our next focus might be. I joined fellow DMCW'ers Jess Reznicek and Julie Brown on the Food Justice Committee. I did not naturally flow to the food and agriculture struggle. Resisting the U.S. war machine has always been my main focus. So I must confess I joined this committee for love, my love for Jess Reznicek. Our community has been greatly enriched by the three DM Occupiers who joined us this year, and Jess has captured my heart.

At first the committee thought they would focus on Monsanto, since they are the biggest and baddest of the corporate agribusiness industries responsible for bringing us GMOs. Plus they have a facility in Ankeny, IA.

While I was still locked up

in February for my Occupy the Caucus trespass charges, Jess sent me the book, "Seeds of Destruction" by William Engdahl as a primer on GMOs to help educate me on the issue. It's a great introduction to the history of GMOs, plus an overview of the rise of corporate agriculture and the real forces behind the global food system. Reading this book, I felt like a veil that was preventing me from seeing the hidden matrix behind global corporatism was being raised.

When I got out of jail, Jess and I started looking around for local places where we might focus our anti-GMO Occupy efforts. Before we even went out to Ankeny to check out their Monsanto facility we discovered the World Food Prize building in the old downtown library. We went to the World Food Prize webpage and were blown away.

The WFP doesn't just represent one agribusiness company like Monsanto, nor does it represent any one land and food concern like GMOs. The WFP is the showcase event for the whole corporate global food system. They are the very same corporate interests that Bishop Dingman spoke against in the 1980s. They are the forces that destroyed agriculture in Iowa and the family farm system so dear to Bishop Dingman. Only now, these corporate interests are doing what they did in Iowa on a global scale.

The WFP people brag that they are the "Nobel Prize

for Food" and pride themselves as the last best hope for feeding our hungry world, ignoring the facts that these very same WFP corporate sponsors have been the major cause of creating world hunger in the first place, in addition to poisoning our environment and making lots and lots of money for the 1%.

The more we learned about the WFP, the more convinced we became to start the Occupy the WFP campaign. Corporate agriculture is to Iowa what Wall Street is to NYC, and the annual WFP is the place Iowans concerned about the spirit of "Global Corporatism" need to occupy.

As I look back over my 36 year history of resistance I can definitely see a theme of homecoming in its arc: from the Pentagon to my home state of Iowa, from resisting the U.S. war machine to resisting the corporate food system that destroyed agriculture and our family farm system in Iowa, poisoned our clean water, eroded our priceless topsoil all the while killing the life forces in our rich natural Iowa soil.

Today our Occupy the WFP campaign is an Iowa based resistance effort with global consequences, resisting the same corporate food system, who are now doing on a global scale what they did to agriculture and the family farm system in Iowa over last 50 years— at a greatly accelerated speed!

Dreaming Continued from page 8...

jails - a 500% increase over the past thirty years - and that there is increasing evidence that large-scale incarceration is not the most effective means of achieving public safety.

And I told him that, according to the Sentencing Project, the research shows that changes in sentencing law and policy, not increases in crime rates, explain most of the increase in the national prison population.

I could see Mr. Buffett's mental machinery at work as he crunched the numbers and calculated the effect on the national economy. But with his customary restraint he said that surely most of these people are violent offenders and need to be incarcerated.

I suggested we go online and look at the Iowa Board of Parole's 2011 report to Governor Branstad. What we found was a table showing the months served by inmates for the most common offenses - 2417 offenders to be exact. Of those paroled, 768 had committed property crimes, 862 had committed drug offenses, 651 were paroled for other nonviolent offenses, and 136 had committed crimes against persons. Mr. Buffett pulled out his calculator and computed that the total cost to taxpayers to incarcerate just the 768 paroled for property crimes was more than \$56 million.

Stopped in his tracks, Mr. Buffett asked if it really makes sense to put nonviolent offenders behind bars at such great expense? Wouldn't it be better to treat the drug problem as a public health problem? Does it really have to be this way?

I told him there was a time in the '90's when the Department of Justice invested money in sending teams around the country to educate justice professionals on the wisdom of Restorative Justice. One of those who made the circuit was Robert Yazzie, the Chief Justice of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court. I traveled with Mr. Yazzie on five or six occasions and witnessed his frustration when others suggested that Restorative Justice was a new thing. His common retort was that the Navajo people had always practiced a form of Restorative Justice - at least until the white man came. He said that of course they didn't use the term "restorative justice" - traditional Navajo law called for hozhoji naat' aanii - Navajo for peacemaking.

And then Mr. Yazzie

would talk about how his people responded to murder. He said the Navajo did not have prisons and never used capital punishment. Because community was the most important thing for a Navajo the worst punishment that could be imposed was for the offender to be banned forever from tribal life.

Mr. Yazzie would go on to explain that even in the very worst of crimes the offender would be given a choice - to leave the community never to return or to remain in the community and provide complete support for the surviving family members. According to Mr. Yazzie, this prescription for justice made perfect sense to his people because every member of the Navajo community was valued and considered indispensable.

The Navajo construct of justice was new to Mr. Buffett but he said that intuitively it made sense to him. He didn't think we would ever respond to murder in the way of the Navajo, but what about keeping nonviolent offenders in the community?

We continued our walk and agreed that the challenges are considerable and not only must millions of dollars be shifted from prisons to education and treatment, there must also be a significant shift in attitude. There must be a shift away from the attitude that advocates exclusion and banishment and a shift toward something akin to traditional concepts of Native American justice - one which values relationships and process more than rules and principles.

We then returned to the question that initiated our conversation - is the Criminal Justice system worth investing in? The constant optimist, Mr. Buffett said that it may well be but that he had neither the time nor the money to make a significant dent in the problem.

But he went on to say that he is interested in the kids, concerned enough that he would be willing to invest money in the Juvenile Justice system.

Then the questions started: how many children are incarcerated in Iowa, how many others are somewhere else in the juvenile system, how much would it cost annually to incarcerate one child in a detention center, how might the money be better spent?

I told him that in Polk County, at \$440 a day, it would cost over \$160,000 to detain one child for a year.

I woke up before we could finish our walk.



Frank Cordaro and Jessica Reznicek joined the NATO protests in Chicago in May 2012.



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<i>Prayers and Love</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Health and Hygiene</i>	<i>House-hold Supplies</i>	<i>Clothing and Bedding</i>	<i>Volunteers</i>	<i>\$Cash Money\$</i>
Without your prayers and goodwill, nothing happens.	Fruit Vegetables Beans Brown Rice Whole Wheat Pasta Rolled Oats Meat and Fish Milk Cheese Butter Sugar Coffee Coffee Creamer Juice (sugar free) Salt and pepper Salad dressing Soups and Stews	Tylenol Ibuprofen Multi Vitamins Antibiotic Ointment Band-Aids Feminine Hygiene Items Disposable Razors Shaving Cream Shampoo Conditioner Lotion Deodorant Toothbrushes Toothpaste Toilet Paper Lip Balm Diapers Baby Formula	Bleach Laundry De-tergent Dish Soap Murphy's Oil Soap Pinesol Trash bags Brooms Rugs Candles Energy-efficient light bulbs Aluminum Foil Plastic Wrap Sandwich and freezer bags Towels	Underwear Socks T-shirts Sweatshirts Hoodies Coats Sleeping Bags Blankets Pillows	Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, clean-up), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance.	Cash donations are essential to pay taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance, purchase supplies, fund resistance actions, jail solidarity, community gardening and off-grid projects.
<i>Peace and justice books are always welcome donations for the Berrigan House Library.</i>	<div>Donations are gratefully accepted on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays, 3 -7 pm at the Dignan House, 1310 7th Street, Des Moines.</div> <div>House Repairs With four old houses, there are plenty of projects large and small. We invite do-it-yourselfers—individuals or groups—with skills in carpentry, plumbing, painting, electrical, etc. to come in, look over our housing needs, and choose a project. Bring your own tools if possible.</div>					

